

## National Family Caregiver Support Program Resources

### Grandparents and Other Relatives Raising Children



#### Introduction

According to the U.S. Census 2000, more than six million children across the country are living in households headed by grandparents or other relatives. Grandparents and other relatives often take on the role of caregiver suddenly, with little or no warning. The problems in family life that lead to a grandparent(s) or other relative raising children may also cause the children to display difficult behavior, which adds to the stress of adjusting to parenting for a second time. The following information contains resources and tips so that you may find needed support and help. Refer to the Grandparent Resource Fact Sheet for the phone numbers and websites of the organizations mentioned below.

#### State Kinship Profiles

These are state-specific fact sheets describing available support services and information. They can be found at [www.gu.org/projg&ostates.htm](http://www.gu.org/projg&ostates.htm) or by calling Generations United at (202) 289-3979. The fact sheets include census data specific to grandparent caregivers, kinship care resources, foster care policies, legislation, and public benefits programs.

#### Support Groups

Support groups provide an opportunity to learn where to find help and to share challenges, needs, resources and experiences with other relatives caring for grandchildren.

For more information contact:

- AARP
- The Brookdale Foundation
- Eldercare Locator



#### Legal Options And Financial Information

Many grandparents and other relatives raising children face legal and financial troubles. Adoption, guardianship, and legal custody are legal relationship options that can make enrolling a child in school or giving permission for medical care easier but these options are not for everyone. Some States have special options such as open adoption, standby guardianship, and de facto custody. Public benefits may also be available to help reduce the cost of raising children, for example, Guardianship subsidies.

and Supplemental Security Income.

To learn more contact:

- Generations United
- Pine Tree Legal Assistance



*Photo provided by Beardall Seniors, Orlando, Florida. Submitted for 2004 Older Americans Month National Photography Contest. Photograph by: Louise Leatherman age 68*

## Education

Without legal custody or guardianship, many grandparents or other relatives find it difficult to enroll the children they are raising in school or give permission to attend school activities. The first step is to talk with the principal's office at your local school and ask about their enrollment policy. If enrollment is denied, check with the local school district superintendent's office.

For more information contact:

- Generations United
- The Children's Defense Fund
- National Parent Teacher Association

## Health Care

Grandparents or other relatives raising children may have trouble obtaining health care or giving legal permission to allow medical treatment. Some states have special laws that allow caregivers to authorize medical treatment. Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) are two programs that provide free or low-cost health insurance.

To learn more contact:

- The Children's Defense Fund
- Generations United

## Housing:

One of the most common challenges grandparents and other relative raising children face is finding and staying in safe, affordable, and appropriate housing.

To obtain help contact:

- Generations United
- The Fair Housing Information Clearinghouse
- National Council of State Housing Agencies
- National Low Income Housing Coalition

*Information provided in this fact sheet was adapted from materials submitted by Generations United, Washington, DC. For more information visit their websites at [www.gu.org](http://www.gu.org).*

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

AoA recognizes the importance of making information readily available to consumers, professionals, researchers, and students. Our website provides information for and about older persons, their families, and professionals involved in aging programs and services. For more information about AoA, please contact: US Dept of Health and Human Services, Administration on Aging, Washington, DC 20201; phone: (202) 401-4541; fax (202) 357-3560; Email: [aoainfo@aoa.gov](mailto:aoainfo@aoa.gov); or contact our website at: [www.aoa.gov](http://www.aoa.gov)